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## **Atlanta Sports Council to Honor Arthur Blank with 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award Presented by Coca-Cola**

**ATLANTA** (April 17, 2017) – Atlanta Falcons and Atlanta United owner Arthur Blank will receive the Atlanta Sports Council’s Lifetime Achievement Award Presented by Coca-Cola at the 2017 Atlanta Sports Awards on July 13 at the Rialto Center for the Arts. [Tickets](#) to the award show are now available to purchase.

“Arthur is a tremendous community leader and his contributions to Atlanta extend far beyond business and sports,” said Dan Corso, President of the Atlanta Sports Council. “He has managed to positively affect the lives of so many within metro Atlanta and we look forward to celebrating his tremendous accomplishments by awarding him our Lifetime Achievement Award on July 13.”

Blank started his journey to become a household name when he co-founded Atlanta-based The Home Depot in 1978. After 23 years, Blank retired from his role with The Home Depot and shortly after solidified himself in the world of professional sports with the purchase of the Atlanta Falcons in 2002. Blank has grown the team to be a \$2.1 billion franchise in just 15 years. Blank also brought Major League Soccer to Atlanta with the Atlanta United FC, which kicked off its inaugural season last month.

Both in his businesses and personal life, Blank has always stressed the importance of giving back and being part of the Atlanta community. In 2013, Blank established the Westside Neighborhood Prosperity Fund, a \$15 million promise to invest in real, positive transformation of Atlanta’s historic Westside neighborhoods surrounding the brand-new Mercedes-Benz Stadium. Since then, roughly \$10 million of the \$15 million has been committed to specific Westside projects and programs, with an additional \$7M to Westside transformation from other Foundation program areas.

In 1995, the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation was created to promote innovative solutions to transform the lives of youth and their families. Since its inception, the Foundation has invested more than \$300 million in connected spaces, art inclusion, environmental stewardship, youth development and community revitalization for each of the Blank Family of Businesses, including the Atlanta Falcons, PGA TOUR Superstore, Mountain Sky Guest Ranch and Atlanta United.

Blank has been awarded many times for his incredible work in the community, including:

- Freeing Voices, Changing Lives Award from the American Institute for Stuttering (2011).
- A recognition by the Council for Quality Growth for his philanthropic endeavors as well as his significant contributions to economic development and quality of life (2010).
- The Distinguished American by the Walter Camp Football Foundation (2006).

Blank has also been recognized across the country for his accomplishments in business and received two honorary degrees: doctor of laws degree from University of Georgia and doctor of humanities degree from Furman University.

“I’m humbled to receive this special honor from the Atlanta Sports Council and grateful for the tremendous recognition it is for our family and all that our teams have contributed to our community over the years,” said Arthur Blank. “Atlanta is a great city and it brings me a high level of satisfaction knowing that our players, coaches, associates and our family foundation have all played a small part in making it so.”

Blank will be joining some of Atlanta’s best in receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award, including most recently John Smoltz (2016), Tom Glavine (2015), Tommy Nobis (2014), Chipper Jones (2013), Dominique Wilkins (2012) and Bobby Cox (2011).

The Atlanta Sports Awards will be held at the Rialto Center of Arts for the first time in 2017. The awards, created by the Atlanta Sports Council in 2006, highlights the high school, collegiate and professional sports community in Atlanta. The gala-style event begins with a private reception and silent auction followed by the awards show and post event party.

In addition to the Lifetime Achievement Award Presented by Coca-Cola, winners in the following categories will be honored:

- Coach of the Year Presented by The Home Depot
- Collegiate Athlete of the Year Presented by AT&T
- High School Athlete of the Year Presented by Kia
- Professional Athlete of the Year Presented by SunTrust Sports & Entertainment
- Team of the Year Presented by PrimeSport
- Community Spirit Award Presented by Georgia Power, A Southern Company

### **Atlanta Sports Awards**

Created in 2006 by the Atlanta Sports Council, the Atlanta Sports Awards has become a way to rally the Atlanta sports community to recognize athletic excellence on a yearly basis. The Atlanta Sports Awards honors those who distinguish themselves from among the five million people living in Atlanta. That includes all professional sports teams, universities, junior colleges and more than 250 public and private high schools in Atlanta. For more information and tickets, visit [www.AtlantaSportsAwards.com](http://www.AtlantaSportsAwards.com).

### **Atlanta Sports Council**

The **Atlanta Sports Council** (ASC), a division of the Metro Atlanta Chamber, facilitates the growth and development of sports in metro Atlanta by serving as a recruiter for major regional, national and international sports events. The organization plays an important role in improving the quality of life for residents in the region through sports, working to drive economic growth and visibility and acting as an advocate for the area teams and annual sports events. For more information, visit [www.AtlantaSportsCouncil.com](http://www.AtlantaSportsCouncil.com).

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